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Book Reviews

Latin Hymns. Selected and Annotated by WILLIAM A. MERRILL.

Boston: Benjamin H. Sanborn & Co., 1904. Pp. xiii + 86. \$1.

From the inception of the Christian religion, the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" has been a conspicuous feature of the Christian service. As our religion has come down to us through the medium of Grecian civilization, and as the exclusive vehicle by which it was carried westward from Palestine was the Greek language, it was only natural that Greek influence upon the earlier hymnology of the church should have been strong. Greek metres even, including the Alcaic and Sapphic strophes, were often employed. Still, when mention is made of the oldest hymns of the church, our thoughts naturally revert to the early Latin hymns, although the "Gloria in Excelsis" and the "Te Deum Laudamus" are in their essence Greek.

It is Professor Merrill's thankworthy service to have made accessible to students in a convenient form a few more than a hundred of the best of these old Latin hymns. In this limited collection he has included all sorts of hymns—hymns of prayer and praise, of meditation and consecration, hymns the most famous, and hymns comparatively unknown. In addition to a carefully revised text he has given his readers an excellent introduction and helpful, well-selected notes; these notes contain but few hints at translation, for this kind of Latin is easy reading; but they are rich in reference to our own church hymnals, wherein these old hymns are found in use to-day in translations, and, above all, in the elaborate citation of parallel passages from the Vulgate Bible.

Among our hymn-writers are literary men, scholars, monks, popes, priests, and laymen; some are mere gerund-grinders, some are real poets of sweetness and power; Ambrose, Gregory the Great, the Venerable Bede, Abelard, Paulus Diaconus, and Innocent III, and about twenty-five others less well-known comprise the list of hymnodists from whom our editor has made his selection.

Many students will be interested in the language not less than in the subject-matter of these hymns. Though some are ancient and some modern, ranging from the fourth to the eighteenth century, the language of all is the strong, vigorous, imaginative Latin of the Vulgate Bible in metrical dress. Some are worked out in elaborate, classical form; most of them, however, are in the easy trochaic tetrameter with accentual, not quantitative, metres and sonorous feminine rhymes. For our frequent tribulations because in our boyhood days we persisted in accenting Latin words on the ultima, we can get endless consolation from these pious hymns.

Professor Merrill's book is remarkably free from errors, or even statements

that admit of debate. To say, for instance, that the Hellenized form of the Hebrew *pesach* "is the Latin for Easter" (p. 2), may be inaccurate, but it is not likely to prove misleading. "Paracletus" the editor calls "remarkable," "Paracletus" "usual" (p. 35). But what is remarkable about Paracletus? It was a perfectly natural transliteration of Παράκλητος at a time when η was pronounced as i. How Paracletus ever arose would be a more interesting question. XRM (p. 27) is an obvious, but unfortunate misprint for XPM.

W. M.

Aeschylus, Prometheus. With Introduction, Notes, and Critical Appendix. By JOSEPH EDWARD HARRY. New York: American Book Co., 1905. Pp. 358. \$1.50.

This edition of the *Prometheus* is in all external particulars a worthy companion to the attractive volumes already issued in Professor Smyth's series. One is struck by the amount of the introductory matter—110 pages—a length hardly justified by the purpose for which the book was intended. The sections on the myth are perhaps the most helpful. As for the rest, the college student of the second or third year will not read these 110 pages, and the instructor will probably form his opinion with the aid of more authoritative critics.

In constituting the text Professor Harry has shown excellent judgment. Few will impute to him as a fault the fact that he has been strongly influenced by Wecklein, especially where he departs from the readings of M. Where he differs from Wecklein it is usually to retain some suspected but defensible reading of M. In the explanatory notes, though still owing much to Wecklein, he takes issue with him on many points, and often Professor Harry's view is preferable. For example, he is probably right in his rendering of οὐδὲν ἀρτεπείν ἔχω (vs. 51), in taking ὁπάτε (vs. 119) as indicative rather than imperative, and in his explanation of vss. 212, 213. Usage supports his contention that κράναι is transitive in vs. 512, and in vs. 535 τόδε seems to go better with the preceding words than with the following. Other places in which he makes a good case against Wecklein are the notes on vss. 156, 435, 701, and 970. On the other hand, his curt dismissal of Wecklein's explanation of vss. 860, 861 is not convincing. Reading δέξεται, with Wecklein (1896), he understands as the object, not the sons of Aegyptus, but the Danaids, and renders the verb "receive them (afford them a home)." But in view of vss. 856-59 it seems much more natural to supply αὐτοῖς with Wecklein, whose defense of the peculiar construction seems sufficient, even though the examples that he cites be not exactly analogous.

Both the introduction and the notes contain not a few errors and careless statements. On p. 14 of the introduction we read that the Carthaginians "formed a part of the Persian Empire"—a conclusion that can not be drawn from the obscure and, to some historians, doubtful co-operation between Persia and Carthage in 480 B. C. On p. 50, *aietós* is included in a list of Homeric forms; but